

Historical Perspective on AGSE-ERE/ACERE Entrepreneurship Research Exchange Conference and its Antecedents:

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In reviewing the history of the Entrepreneurship Research Exchange Conference series it must be recognised that it did not commence within a vacuum. Indeed the birth was associated with many parents and international relationships which contributed to the development of a credible discipline of entrepreneurship within Australian academe.

Entrepreneurship in Australia has a long and distinguished ancestry where the culture has been at its best when opportunities have been identified and inventions exploited through innovation to develop new products and industries that the community needs – from the stump jump plough and agriculture to cochlear ear implants and enhanced hearing. In each case these developments gained world markets. It is clear that the entrepreneurs associated with such developments understood the dynamics of opportunity recognition and successful business outcomes.

An early antecedent associated with academic interest in this entrepreneurial dynamic was the development of training and teaching programs to facilitate the preparation of effective business plans for raising capital. One recorded example is associated with Geoff Meredith, AM, who, as Professor of Accounting and Financial Management at University of New England, Armidale, and (later Southern Cross University) founded the Financial Management Research Centre in 1968, specifically for small business and created MBA units in accounting, finance, small enterprise, entrepreneurship and professional practice management. Geoff was on the original Wiltshire committee (Wiltshire Committee, 1971, Report of the Committee on Small Business, Canberra; Government Printer, Australia) and when the Federal Government launched the Enterprise Workshop scheme for final year Science/Engineering students in 1979/80, Geoff provided the educational input.



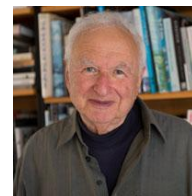
Within business practice, and during 1972-75 as the Defence Research Attaché (DSTO) in the Australian Embassy in Washington, Murray Gillin was involved in analysing and reviewing the commercialisation of inventive defence research into highly relevant equipment for the armed services. In particular, emphasis was given to reporting on the entrepreneurial way American industry transferred



these developments into market-leading consumer goods and services. Could these principles be adapted to Australia? It was not until Murray transferred to Swinburne Institute of Technology (1979) as Dean of Engineering that opportunities for such entrepreneurial learning concepts could be adapted to the academic mindset.

At the same time, the Australian Government became increasingly aware of the need for Australia to move from a resource-based economy to one based more on technology and skills. Senator John Button, Federal Minister of Industry, Technology and Commerce recognised this could be accomplished only by training entrepreneurs who were capable of developing successful and innovative businesses and suggested that: “...many of our best inventions are lost to overseas concerns because Australians fail to exploit their industrial potential. If we are to capitalize on our ingenuity we must train entrepreneurs capable of developing and managing technology based industries”.

In response to this situation, the federal and state governments initiated the Enterprise Workshop scheme in 1979 to promote economic growth and job creation through new technology, innovation, and entrepreneurship (Wan, Victor K. 1988, Journal of Small Business Management, Vol. 26, No. 4). The concept for this Enterprise Workshop idea was first proposed by Ralph Tobias, Head of the Technology Branch of the Department of Productivity. The format of the program was initially developed by Wayne Brown, Director of the Innovation Centre at the University of Utah. Professor Brown was invited to be the first program director of the Enterprise Workshop and along with Geoff Meredith contributed to the development of the formal educational input. The overall concept was initially developed with final year science and engineering students in Melbourne (1979-80), and focused primarily on the Business Plan for commercialising ideas into successful business ventures. Murray Gillin was Director of the Victorian Enterprise Workshop from 1981-1992. By 1984 Murray had identified a “fatal flaw” in this single approach to entrepreneurship education – “the method focused on writing a plan to raise capital for a new product but provided little learning in how to convert ideas into opportunities, assess grounded market need and to manage and lead the business to sustainable success”. With this insight, and support from Ian Shedden, a Graduate Diploma in Entrepreneurial studies was commenced in 1985 within the Faculty of Engineering at Swinburne Institute of Technology.



Ian Shedden, Managing Director of Shedden Pacific, was one of Australia’s foremost entrepreneurs. Ian was a national leader in seeking government

support and university commitment to developing our national talent. Ian was Chairman of the Swinburne Faculty of Engineering Advisory Committee from 1979-1989 and Chair of the Advisory Committee for the Centre of Entrepreneurship and Innovation at Swinburne 1985-1990.

Another visionary contributor to the development of entrepreneurship education at this time was John Bailey who commenced Australia's first PhD study at the University of Melbourne in 1975 with the title "Examining the learning styles of high performing entrepreneurs in Australia". John also conducted a study of Small Business Education and Training for the National



Training Council in 1979/80. John Bailey worked with the Enterprise Workshop program in 1980/81 and in 1982 offered a 14 evening workshop in Entrepreneurship. The first "Centre for the Development of Entrepreneurs" (CDE) was launched by John at Chisholm Institute of Technology in 1984 with a \$250K grant from Federal Government and \$250K grant from the Victorian Government. The Federal Government later launched CDEs at the University of

Queensland (Noel Lindsay, Director) and University of Tasmania. The funding for these Centres required it could not be used for research. In late 2003 Noel Lindsay moved to the Centre for the Development of Entrepreneurs at the University of South Australia and in 2006 was appointed Director of the Entrepreneurship, Commercialisation and Innovation Centre



(ECIC) at the University of Adelaide. The ECIC offers both an UG (Bachelor of Innovation and Entrepreneurship) and PG (Master of Applied Innovation and Entrepreneurship) and had 24 PhD students in 2012.

From 1983 the National Enterprise Workshop program was established. This was a national "community outreach", non-award, experiential entrepreneurship program where participants from the local community were exposed to entrepreneurship training and development of their businesses using a business plan model. It was part of a national competition for entrepreneurs.

An important antecedent in support of enhanced entrepreneurship infrastructure was the findings of the 1983 Espie Report which identified the absence of venture capital and the widespread lack of technology-based start-up management expertise in Australia. This report resulted in the development of the Management and Investment Companies (MIC) scheme, (David M Forsaith, Small Enterprise Research December 1993, Vol. 2, No. 1-2 : pp. 36-51)

which led to the formation of The Australian Private Equity and Venture Capital Association Limited (AVCAL) as a national association which represents the private equity and venture capital industries.

In addition the Federal Government initiated the formation of the Victorian Innovation Centre in 1987 with Ian Shedden, Chairman, and Murray Gillin as CEO and John Bailey as a Director. This concept was then extended to centres in each state as a consulting resource for inventors and entrepreneurs. This experience in dealing with very self centered inventors reinforced the need to develop a holistic approach to effective entrepreneurship education suitably informed by both theoretical and applied research.

Parallel to these developments within Australia, John Bailey opened up contacts in the USA by visiting Prof Jeffrey Timmons in 1985 at Babson College and attending the first Price-Babson Symposium of Entrepreneurship Educators (SEE), aimed at improving teaching and research by teaming faculty with highly successful entrepreneurs wishing to teach in entrepreneurship programs. Jeff Timmons visited CDE in 1985 and conducted Venture Capital seminars in Melbourne and Sydney for the new MIC companies. In addition Clark Hummerston Bailey Pty. Ltd. brought Howard Stevenson (Harvard University) to Australia in 1989 at the request of the MIC Licensing Board. They wanted to impress University Vice Chancellors with the importance of entrepreneurship education.

By 1987-89, and in contrast to the new developments in educating and training of ethical and dynamic entrepreneurs, Australia's celebrated so-called business entrepreneurs, such as Christopher Skase and Allan Bond, represented most of the failings of corporate behaviour in the 1980s – "When Greed was Good; when banks blindly lent billions to Australia's high flying entrepreneurs to build their paper empires" (P Barry, Rise and Fall of Allan Bond, Bantam books, 1990).. This rogue's gallery produced a very negative perception of entrepreneurship in the minds of the public and university management in general.

On John Bailey's advice, and in 1988, Murray Gillin attended both the 4th SEE at Babson in Boston and the 8th Babson College Entrepreneurship Research Conference (BCERC) in Calgary, Canada (also attended by Per Davidsson for the first time). These two experiences were pivotal in expanding Murray's appreciation of the opportunities for entrepreneurship education and research. Using the networks established at these Babson conferences Murray Gillin determined to develop the first Master's degree focused wholly on entrepreneurship

with the principle, in the words of Kevin Hindle, “not as theory for theory’s sake but theory for practice’s sake”. Following accreditation of the Master of Entrepreneurship and Innovation in late 1988, and which included the existing Graduate Certificate and Graduate Diploma subjects, a team comprising Kevin Hindle, Bruce Johnson, Ray Wood, Ron Wheeldon and Brian Ball together with John Bailey and Murray Gillin commenced teaching the Master’s year subjects in 1989 with just 5 students. This combination of academic and practitioner allowed for team teaching with both an academic and pracademic in the class. In both 1989 and 1990 BHP Pty Ltd sponsored visits by Prof Bill Bygrave from Babson College to lead teaching workshops for our staff and guests from other schools. In 1991 Prof Bill Wetzel was the visitor from University of New Hampshire.



Also, in 1989, Swinburne University of Technology (SUT) was proclaimed by the Government with Richard Pratt, Australia’s leading entrepreneurial businessman, as the first Chancellor and Prof Iain Wallace as Vice Chancellor - both strongly supported entrepreneurship research and teaching.

Significantly, units on entrepreneurship research were included in the final year of the Master’s program. Two PhD students were enrolled in 1989, namely Kevin Hindle and Jose Alonso who each participated in a number of BCERC conferences.

It was also clear that without the establishment of a strong academic research performance in entrepreneurship it would be difficult for the discipline of entrepreneurship to gain acceptance and credibility in the Australian University system. The claustrophobic effect of the ‘silo’ system amongst disciplines in Business Schools was a major impediment to the recognition of entrepreneurship scholarship. Continued participation by Swinburne staff and research students in BCERC conferences facilitated effective and important research contacts with leading academics and a worldwide recognition of developing entrepreneurship research in Australia. Through the 1990s’ other Australian academic researchers made their appearance at BCERC and discussions commenced as to hosting a BCERC conference in Australia. At the 1992 BCERC conference hosted by INSEAD Management School in Fontainebleau, France Neil Churchill as Conference Director, and with the support of Bill Bygrave, agreed to a straw poll of attendees to gauge interest in hosting the conference in Australia. The straw poll showed very significant support for the concept but the committee never supported such a proposal. BCERC is strongly focused on Europe and North America.

An important development in collaborative international research was initiated by Paul Reynolds of Babson College by proposing a Panel Study of Entrepreneurial Dynamics (PSED), a research program designed to enhance the scientific understanding of how people start businesses. The first concept meeting, which Murray G attended, was held at Chicago airport in November 1995. At the next meeting Murray Gillin first met Per Davidsson who is now acknowledged as an outstanding leader in entrepreneurship research, both in Australia and overseas. Indeed the highly successful Comprehensive Australian Study of Entrepreneurial Emergence (CAUSEE) project and led by Per can trace its genesis to the PSED programs.



Following visiting professorships at Bond University by Alan Carsrud (UCLA) and Ray Smilor (University of Texas) in 1991, Evan Douglas was invited to enter a Bond University student based business plan in the first 1992 global Moot Corp (business plan) competition at the University of Texas, Austin.

Successive entries included the Portable Toilet in 1992, Seaweed in 1993, Breeze shoes in 1994, Decklock fasteners in 1995, and EcoClear in 1996.



Following Evan's transfer to Queensland University of Technology in 1997, Evan Douglas, Allan Carsrud and Murray Gillin were invited to observe the Moot Corp competition in Austin, Texas. After a number of discussions with Moot Corp organisers Evan intimated to Allan Carsrud and Murray over drinks his interest in starting an Australian Moot Corp competition. It was agreed Australia was not large enough to have two such competitions and Murray advised Evan that AGSE would support a QUT based Moot Corp (later John Heine competition) and AGSE would seek to establish a Babson style research conference. This concept did not eventuate until 2003.

Following a SUT organisation restructure in 1994, the Centre for Entrepreneurship and Innovation was transferred from the Faculty of Engineering to a new Division of Business and Arts. The VC's rationale was "to focus the Business School on entrepreneurship". Of course the centre staff were seen as 'lepers' by the Business School staff and so from 1994 to 1998 the Centre and Ernst and Young participated in a joint company titled the "Institute for Entrepreneurship and Innovation Pty Ltd" (IEI) in which all the Swinburne entrepreneurship teaching programs were taught out of the teaching rooms of Ernst and Young at 120 Collins Street Melbourne. This partnership between academe and practice was very well received.

Quality student intakes increased significantly and the measured outcomes of entrepreneurial success by graduates were noted by the relevant Government Minister (W. E. McMullan and L. M. Gillin, 1998, Technovation, vol. 18, no. 4).

The teaching model comprising nested suites of Grad. Cert. Grad. Dip. and Master of Entrepreneurship and Innovation was delivered in Singapore from 1992-1996 and as a franchised program with the Israel School of Entrepreneurial Management & Innovation (ISEMI) in Tel Aviv from 1996-2006 in association with the Director, Adjunct Professor Liora Katzenstein.



In 1999 the IEI returned to the Swinburne campus to join the new Swinburne Graduate School of Management Directed by John Miller. Following this reorganisation and the construction of a new building in 2001, the Vice Chancellor, on advice from the school's new Director, Adolph Hanich, named the building and the school – Australian Graduate School of Entrepreneurship comprising the MEI, MBA and PhD programs. All other post graduate programs were associated with the School of Business.

Also in 1999 Bill Bygrave and Paul Reynolds of Babson College invited AGSE to provide 'home' for The Global Entrepreneurship Monitor (GEM) project in Australia. Kevin Hindle as Director of Entrepreneurship Research at AGSE was appointed to head the national team in Australia from 2000-2004 inclusive.



GEM brings together some of the world's best scholars in entrepreneurship to study the complex relationships between entrepreneurship, economic growth and national prosperity. Twenty-one countries participated in the 2000 study, including Australia for the first time. Every year, each participating country conducts its own independent investigation: but— every national research team uses exactly the same methods and measures in exactly the same way. This permits direct comparison between nations. Each national team consists of a university-based team with special capacity in entrepreneurship research, and a sponsorship support infrastructure given the substantial costs involved in data collection and analysis. Every year, each country produces a national report and GEM's central coordinating team produces an international GEM Executive Report. This global report summarises the results from all nations and synthesises the most important overall findings from an international

perspective. In 2011 the Australian Centre for Entrepreneurship at QUT took up the invitation with Per Davidsson as Director and assisted by Paul Steffens.

From 1999 Evan Douglas, as Head of the Graduate School of Business at QUT developed a number of entrepreneurship units within the MBA and later added a Master's program titled Master of Entrepreneurship & Innovation. The latter was short-lived due to low enrolments - although the Entrepreneurship courses were well subscribed, the great majority of students preferred to take them as the Entrepreneurship Specialisation in the MBA program. In addition, with the appointment of Per Davidsson in 2004, QUT developed the staffing and structure to establish a world ranking entrepreneurship research entity. This became the Australian Centre for Entrepreneurship in 2010.

Although officially retired at the end of 1998, Murray Gillin continued teaching and supervising PhD students and seeking opportunities to further the exchange of teaching/research skills among the academic community. The Small Enterprise Association of Australia and New Zealand (SEEANZ) which Geoffrey Meredith (Life Member) helped establish in 1987 was one possible vehicle AGSE could support in furthering the development of entrepreneurial research. In 2003 Evan Douglas reported that both SEAANZ and Australia New Zealand Academy of Management (ANZAM) conferences included several entrepreneurship papers in their programs, but entrepreneurship was not the main interest. Evan was on the committee of ANZAM in 2003 when Geoff Soutar was President, and there was little support for more entrepreneurship activity. On the other hand SEAANZ also included entrepreneurship papers in its conferences but generally with a small business perspective. By 2003 SEEANZ appeared more committed to being an all-purpose association than a conference dedicated to entrepreneurship research. In discussion, Evan Douglas and Murray Gillin agreed there was a significant need within academe to provide a focus for sharing excellent academic research in entrepreneurship and to establish a forum in which on-coming researchers and academics had a supportive environment to encourage their chosen career in entrepreneurship.

Following these discussions, Murray Gillin proposed to Bill Bygrave, Director of BCERC that as BCERC would not come to Australia perhaps the Arthur M Blank Centre for Entrepreneurship at Babson College might consider being a co-sponsor for a regional entrepreneurship conference, separate from the BCERC annual conference, and called the "AGSE-Babson College Regional Entrepreneurship and Innovation Conference". Bill

Bygrave was very supportive of this concept and over the years has attended many times and given important keynote lectures to AGSE-ERE. Having got agreement from the SUT Vice Chancellor and Director AGSE to establish such a concept it was necessary to raise the necessary finances. Murray Gillin called on three Departments in Canberra thinking the support available to entrepreneurship training in the 1980s' would deliver sponsorship in 2004. Of course this proposal was post the collapse of the "dot com boom" and Canberra was sceptical of entrepreneurial endeavours. The Department of Communications, Information Technology and the Arts first explained they had difficulty in sponsoring travelling expenses for keynote lecturers to a conference but could justify funds for a research exchange model. This is why the 'conference' is known officially as a 'research exchange'. In addition they could not fund one University in such an endeavour but would look favourably on a consortium approach. This last requirement resulted in Evan Douglas at QUT, Noel Lindsay at University of South Australia and Peter Sheldrake at RMIT joining with AGSE to form a committee of management and to underwrite some expenses. The sponsors were: Department of Communications, Information Technology; The National Innovation Awareness Scheme; The Innovation Xchange; Ernst & Young; Brown Bros. (Milawa); and SAI Private. The MOU identified the AGSE as owning the conference name, AGSE to appoint Exchange chairman and to provide for administrative support. This arrangement followed closely the BCERC structure. Indeed selection of papers, awards and keynote speakers were the responsibility of the committee of management. It was also proposed to follow the Babson model of a three year site rotation – one year at AGSE, one year at another Australian school and if possible one year off-shore.

In 2004 Shaker Zahra was appointed the new Director of BCERC. The first AGSE-Babson College Regional Entrepreneurship and Innovation Research Exchange Conference was held in the AGSE building at Swinburne University of Technology on February 24-25, 2004. 87 Papers were presented during the two days of exchange sessions representing 45% from Australia, 25% from New Zealand, and 30% from the rest of the world, particularly Europe and UK. Paper selection was by an international panel of researchers – 3 international journal editors (John Butler, Dean Shepherd and Shaker Zahra) and 6 Australian academics (Evan Douglas, Kevin Hindle, Frank La Pira, Noel Lindsay John Yencken and Murray Gillin). Following the Babson model, the proceedings of the Exchange were published in "Regional Frontiers of Entrepreneurship Research" – 33 papers published in full along with 53 extended summaries.



In addition and as a new initiative, a CD Rom was provided to each participant with the full text of each presented paper.

Dissemination and encouragement of cutting edge research was facilitated by limiting attendance at the conference to those with an active focus on research. To support a number of PhD candidates at the conference, Kevin Hindle organised a Doctoral Consortium with each participant displaying a poster of their research project. This attracted 15 participants. This conference structure and the associated hospitality focus, provided the AGSE-ERE with a reputation for warm, friendly and excellent networking opportunities. Such an outcome ensured that understanding entrepreneurship and venture creation continued to be an important career option for many talented people.

As an additional component of the Babson – AGSE partnership John Bailey, Murray Gillin, Jeffrey Timmons and Bill Bygrave met in June 2003 at Babson College to discuss a regional presentation of the Price-Babson SEE Program. The program was agreed for the week following the research exchange. Unfortunately advice was received in September that Babson would charge full commercial rates for participating staff which made the jointly sponsored program non-viable. With the support of Bill Bygrave as lead presenter and the contributions of John Bailey and Murray Gillin a very successful program was conducted with 20 Fellows from 10 teaching centres. The offering was repeated in 2005. There is still an opportunity for such a program to develop staff, build networks, and exchange successful teaching methods.

In September 2004 Shaker Zahra advised that Babson College would not continue the joint partnership with AGSE to facilitate the regional entrepreneurship research conference. At an extraordinary meeting of the conference committee it was agreed the name be changed to the AGSE Entrepreneurship Research Exchange and known as AGSE-ERE. Following invitations to interested academic schools, the committee for the 2005 conference included: Queensland University of Technology; University of South Australia; Swinburne University of Technology; RMIT University; University of Western Australia; UNITEC New Zealand; Massey University New Zealand; Cape Peninsula University of Technology, South Africa and Nanyang Technological University, Singapore. The 2005 conference was again held at AGSE on February 10-11, with 91 papers presented and a PhD consortium. A new initiative was the inclusion of international keynote speakers who reviewed opportunities for entrepreneurship research. The keynotes included Shailendra Vykarman, University of

Cambridge, UK; Per Davidsson from Jönköping, Sweden and Queensland University of Technology; Dean Shepherd, then at University of Colorado now at Indiana University; and Mark Weaver, Rowan University, USA. Dean Shepherd joined the committee as a corresponding member in 2005 and has been present at all conferences from 2005-2012, except 2006.



The international panel for selecting both papers for presentation and for publication was continued with the following additions to the 2004 team of: Per Davidsson, QUT; John Watson, Western Australia; Howard Frederick, UNITEC NZ; Claire Massey, Massey NZ; and Alistair Campbell, South Africa.

The February 2006 AGSE-ERE held in Auckland, New Zealand was jointly sponsored by UNITEC and Massey Universities. Howard Frederick was chairman of the local committee.



Subsequent AGSE-ERE conferences were hosted by Queensland University of Technology, 2007; Swinburne University of Technology, 2008; University of Adelaide, 2009; University of the Sunshine Coast, 2010; and Swinburne University of Technology in 2011 before responsibility and management was transferred to a new 'home' at the Australian Centre for Entrepreneurship at Queensland University of Technology under the chair of Professor Per Davidsson and under the new name "ACERE". ACERE stands for "Australian Centre for Entrepreneurship Research Exchange" thus marking the continuity with its predecessor

The strategic plan of the AGSE at SUT as expressed in 2001, was to be a leader in entrepreneurship education, innovation training and both academic and applied research. However these strategies were not an end in them self but provided a platform to explore ways and means to facilitate a community culture of entrepreneurial thinking and behaviour. Examples of outcomes associated with this strategy include the provision of the Innovation Centre for inventors and start-up entrepreneurs, partnerships with industry in delivering teaching programs, and facilitation of entrepreneurial policy awareness at Government level through GEM reports. From 2004, the AGSE launched the AGSE-Entrepreneurship Research Exchange and the AGSE-Symposium for Entrepreneurial Educators. In 2005 the AGSE launched the Richard Pratt Entrepreneur Oration series featuring outstanding leaders from business and the community as invited orators. Also in 2005, and to further recognise the contribution of very successful entrepreneurs to community wealth creation, selected entrepreneurs were inducted into the AGSE-Entrepreneurship Hall of Fame with a ceremony

that attracted media exposure of both ethical and successful entrepreneurship. With changing leadership at AGSE these successful events were suspended from 2010.

In conclusion it is appropriate to ask - have the opportunities and programs identified in 1970s' & 80s' and the subsequent developments through the 90s' and early 21st century resulted in academic entrepreneurship behaviour which has delivered a legacy of quality education, research and new cultural values for Australia? In general the answer is a resounding yes although the impact has been far from uniform across Australia. There is still a major need to broaden the programs in the majority of Australian higher education institutions and particularly Go8 Universities, if we are to see significant national wealth creation from entrepreneurship and innovation.

At the beginning of this historical perspective on entrepreneurship, and of the AGSE specifically, mention was made that ... "the birth was associated with many parents and international relationships which contributed to the development of a credible discipline of entrepreneurship within Australian academe". From the developing interest in entrepreneurship some 40 years ago it is salutary to assess growth of the discipline not just in terms of education programs, research papers and new businesses etc. but by considering the human contribution to the discipline. It is often overlooked that human behaviour in entrepreneurship and organisations can be more significant in successful outcomes than the hard numbers achieved, although such numbers are a necessity to gaining sustainable wealth creation. One is aware of the venture capitalist axiom 'give me a first class team and a second class product rather than a first class product and a second class team'. It is the 'team, team, and team'.

Using Swinburne organisations as a case study to evaluate entrepreneurial behaviour, it can be said that in the 70s' the future entrepreneurship staff and academics to be 'adopted' into SIT were in the 'process' of gaining knowledge and experience about turning ideas into opportunities. At the beginning of the 80s' the visionary 'twins' Ian Shedden and Murray Gillin were 'adopted' by (Director, SIT/VC, SUT), (parents) along with 'cousin' John Bailey to bring entrepreneurship into mainstream academe.. The development of these players and teaching programs was nurtured by SIT/SUT senior staff, the availability of government and business resources through enterprise workshops and innovation centres and the beginnings of a venture capital industry. Importantly their 'schooling' gained much from time with Babson College and the Price-Babson SEE program. During this period the principal players can be considered exemplars of the findings from on-going research into the human dimension of entrepreneurship - where passion, dedication, commitment and boundless

energy were there for all to see. By the end of the 80s' decade the SUT entrepreneurship entity had grown to produce world recognised education programs attuned to the needs of start-up enterprises and venture creation. It was also recognised that viable, dynamic and world class research would be necessary as a 'diet' for the growth and maturity of entrepreneurship as a discipline in the Australian context. It was unfortunate at this time (1987-90) that unethical business promoters introduced the 'disease' of greed and self-interest which gave entrepreneurship a bad press and slowed the acceptance of entrepreneurship as a cultural value in the community.

In the 90s', wealth creation through innovation and social entrepreneurship was associated with development of the internet, the dot com boom and philanthropy. Indeed the government and business were gung-ho about growth until the bubble burst with countless shareholders in new start enterprises losing their investments and entrepreneurs their personal dream.

The new millennium saw a shift in entrepreneurship education from simply a focus on growth at any cost to understanding ethical entrepreneurship behaviour. At this time the AGSE was created in 2001, not as a result of a business plan but because the VC made the decision to collect the various entrepreneurial activities into a highly visible and 'mature' centre of excellence. With the addition of Adolph Hanich as Director, AGSE and Tom McKaskill as Director, MEI programs, the team spirit, enthusiasm and dedication of the whole AGSE team provided the human environment for delivering creativity and new initiatives. These initiatives included GEM; new units in the MEI degree; doubling of PhD candidates; Research Exchange; Education Exchange; In-company Executive Education; Pratt Oration; Hall of Fame and planning a new Entrepreneurship Research Centre. These were exciting times and added greatly to the health, and personal contributions of staff to the Graduate School. The human lesson from this stage is that when the VC and Director are totally committed to the AGSE (emotionally, cognitively and financially) the operating staff are fully committed to 'make things happen'. Such performance is recognised internationally and nationally, with cooperative ventures becoming a reality.



In 2004 Swinburne University of Technology appointed a new VC, completed a major reorganisation, and combined the AGSE with the Business School to form a new Faculty. With this reorganisation the AGSE Director reported to the new Dean along with the other Heads of Schools. With this forced 'marriage', based on structure rather than purpose, much energy and committee time was spent on discussing 'silo' type issues of concern to the

disciplines in the Faculty. As in the 1994 reorganisation, the AGSE staff again experienced a perceived environment of being 'lepers' in the Faculty. From 2007-2009 AGSE lost its senior leadership staff. Importantly the AGSE-ERE has now moved to ACE at QUT, a Centre that is expanding, has a supportive VC and Dean and a world renowned Director in Per Davidsson. The Entrepreneurship Conference is in excellent hands and with the current entrepreneurial behaviour and commitment to ensuring research is both theoretical and applied to business and the community it is expected ACERE conferences will have a long life.