



# Alumni Update

Physics and ISS Alumni Association • February 2006

## Honours for Harry Messel and Dr Karl

Science Foundation for Physics founder Professor Harry Messel and Julius Sumner Miller Fellow Dr Karl Kruszelnicki have been named in the 2006 Australian Day Honours list. The Honours recognise and celebrate outstanding achievements and contributions of extraordinary Australians.

Prof. Messel was one of just eight Australians to receive the *Companion of the Order of Australia (AC)*, the highest of the honours. Other recipients of the AC include medical researchers Emeritus Professor Charles Ruthven Blackburn and Professor Willis Raymond Marchall, health care pioneer Sister Mary Bernice Elphick, and actor Nicole Kidman. (Prof. Messel says that one of the best things about his award was appearing in the newspaper beside Ms Kidman.)

Dr Karl received a *Member of the Order of Australia (AM)* for his tireless work in communicating the excitement of science to the general public. Karl's media appearances in newspapers, on radio and on television, and his many books on popular science, have made him a household name in Australia and overseas.

Dr Karl has been the School of Physics Julius Sumner Miller Fellow since the position was created in 1994.

## Gaensler wins Astronomy Prize

Professor Bryan Gaensler, soon to join the School as our fifth Federation Fellow, has been awarded the 2006 Newton Lacy Pierce Prize by the American Astronomical Society, the largest organization of professional astronomers in North America. Gaensler received the Pierce Prize for his work on the interactions between neutron stars and their surroundings, which led to a greater appreciation of the wide diversity of magnetized neutron stars.

## 2006 Annual Dinner, 30 March – Get it in your diary!

Every year, the School of Physics and the Science Foundation for Physics host an Annual Dinner for staff, students, alumni and friends. This year's dinner will be held on 30 March at the Women's College, with good food, fine company and a special guest after-dinner speaker, actor Henri Szeps OAM.

Henri is best known for the ABC TV show *Mother and Son* and numerous stage and television roles — less well known is that he graduated from the University of Sydney in the 1960s with a B.Sc. in physics and mathematics, and later a B.E in electrical engineering.

So join us for Dinner in 2006 — look out for an invitation by post or email soon, or contact Alison Thorn, [a.thorn@physics.usyd.edu.au](mailto:a.thorn@physics.usyd.edu.au), +61-2-9036 5194.



Harry Messel, Companion of the Order of Australia, "for service to Australian science and to education as an outstanding educator raising awareness of the importance of the study of science and in particular physics, for instrumental contributions to improving science teaching in schools, and for conservation advocacy relating to endangered crocodile and alligator species".



Dr Karl, Member of the Order of Australia, "for service to the community through promoting greater understanding and knowledge of the application of science to daily living as an author and science commentator on radio and television".