**Transcript – John McKenzie**

I think in all of the aspects which I have been involved with in my career whether it’s been science or whether it’s been education or whether it’s been administration it’s always been driven by a belief that you have a responsibility to try and provide the next generation with the best opportunity that you can to allow them to maximise their fitness. Specifically with things relating to education through the Academy of Science and the primary connection program we were looking at trying to get science incorporated into the primary curriculum and the way to do that was in fact to dovetail it with literacy that’s been very successful with over sixty percent of Australian primary schools now using the program. Scientifically adding a population geneticist perspective to micro-revolutionary processes more particularly to understand how pesticide resistance evolves and using that information to actually think of ways in which you could devise better pesticides and deliver them more efficiently so that you minimise the chance of resistance happening in the future. I think Australian science has traditionally punched significantly above its weight, we’ve done very well, and in fact I think you could say that of Australian research more generally I think the humanities and social sciences have also done very well in that regard. I think with respect to science it’s an expensive past time and proportionately the amount of money that governments of both persuasions have invested in fundamental research has decreased over the years so that’s a challenge to be able to continue to do as well as we have. I think as scientists we continually need to advise the community, politicians, businesses, that really science provides the foundation for the country’s future. The impact of La Trobe well seminal, absolutely seminal. I came through La Trobe as an inaugural foundation student so a very small institution, it meant that all of us in the first few years belonged to a college whether we were in residence or day members of the college so that you got to meet people from across the University and the friendships you know still there a group of us who meet three or four times a year almost fifty years after we were here in a sense, um very important to me, and also very important the most important person in my life my wife Ruth I met here at La Trobe and to interact with our teachers in a very personal manner, and it has certainly has always influenced me in terms of me having an open door policy to students even when I was a Dean, students were encouraged to come and see me if I was lecturing to them at the time. I was the first member of my family to come to university and that was true for so many of us as inaugural students and I think that added to the sense of wonder and the sense of excitement you know we were on a new adventure together and because we were all sharing that adventure the whole four hundred of us if you like it just added such an important dimension and I think that also in a sense was one of the reasons why La Trobe and the experience at La Trobe was so important and so impressive - so wonderful.