

New home for the Mammal Research Institute (MRI) and Mathematics

By Martie Meyer

Posted on 08 April 2013



From the left: Prof Chris Chimimba (Head: Department of Zoology and Entomology), Prof Jean Lubuma (Head: Department of Mathematics and Applied Mathematics), Prof Bob Millar (Director: Mammal Research Institute), Prof Cheryl de la Rey (Vice-Chancellor and Principal), Dr Albert van Jaarsveld (CEO: National Research Foundation), Dr Clifford Nxomani (Managing Director: National Zoological Gardens) and Prof Anton Ströh (Dean: Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences).

□ In order to develop research and postgraduate education at the University, we need to create an enabling environment for our staff and students. The opening of the new home for the MRI and Mathematics in the Faculty of Natural and Agricultural Sciences is an excellent example of our commitment to this goal.

"This will expand the University's research and teaching facilities, which form part of the UP's long term strategy (UP 2025). It will also promote the increase in the number of students in the Science, Engineering and Technology (SET) knowledge field." These were some of the comments shared by the Vice-Chancellor and Principal, Prof Cheryl de la Rey, at the official opening of the revamped facilities on 2 April 2013.

She emphasised the significant contribution that the MRI has made to research over the past fifty years and said that "there is no doubt that the MRI is the premier research institute on African mammals in the world." Prof De la Rey also elaborated on the importance of Mathematics as a discipline and stressed that the African continent needs to promote skills and postgraduate research in the field of Mathematics. She concluded her address by emphasising the importance of multidisciplinary research and expressed the hope that the sharing of the facilities would help to "blur the academic boundaries" for the benefit of everyone.

Prof Robert (Bob) Millar, Director of the MRI (based in the Department of Zoology and Entomology) highlighted some of the achievements and future endeavours of the Institute. In addition he announced a R32 million grant from the Tshwane Animal Health Cluster, for research in collaboration with the Faculty of Veterinary Science. The Cluster is a Technology Innovation Agency-led initiative, established to stimulate the development of commercially viable technologies that specifically address the challenges confronting the animal health sector.

Prof Jean Lubuma, Head of the Department of Mathematics and Applied Mathematics, acknowledged that the newly renovated facilities constituted a significant positive step for the Department to refocus on the implementation of its strategic plan for research and postgraduate education. He added that sharing the building with the MRI is a golden opportunity for collaboration on multidisciplinary research within the SARChI Chair in Mathematical Models and Methods in Bioengineering and Biosciences that the Department will be hosting. He concluded by stressing the urgent need for additional critical facilities due to the dramatic increase in student numbers in the past few years.

Language Editor: Melodie Veldhuizen

[<< Back to the news list](#)

Bookmark this page: